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764 involves one real aboriginal explanation of the custom. His account of the treatment accorded the body of a suicide I have seen nowhere else.

The Alabama now living in Texas give the following account of their old burial customs:

Nowadays several persons dig a grave, but in former times a single old man performed the office. While he was at work upon it he ate by himself, for it was thought that anyone who ate with him would fall sick. He did not smoke, and, no matter how hot the sun was, he drank no water. Anciently the body was bundled tightly together, wrapped about, and placed upon a board which was then sunk into the earth, head to the east, so that when his spirit got up it would be in the right position to start on the spirit trail westward.[66] A framework of poles was afterwards put all about the grave. Afterwards the gravedigger washed his clothes, took some of the button-snake root, and vomited. Then he could eat, and the relatives of the deceased gave him a horse in payment. Those who attended to burials in later times must duck all over in the creek four times no matter how cold the weather. My informant had done this when ice was on the water and the snow flying, and he almost fainted from the cold. Blankets were put under the head of the corpse as a pillow and a butcher knife in his hand with which to fight off an eagle supposed to infest the trail of the dead. For four days the wife or husband and the children and near relatives visited the grave every morning before breakfast and every evening before supper, and at their evening visits they lighted a fire at the head. After each of these visits they went to a stream, bathed all over, and washed their clothing before they ate. For four days they must eat no food that contained salt, and during the same period they remained quiet and made no noise. Not only the family but all of the people abstained from playing ball then, though they might do some hunting.

Although the later accounts do not mention the custom of discharging a gun the moment a death took place, it appears from Gregg that it was maintained until after the Creeks had removed west.[67]

[845] Among all of the Creek tribes a miscarriage, a stillborn child, or a very young child was laid away in a hollow tree where it was nicely ceiled in. Otherwise it was thought that there would be a drought, that a pestilence would break out, or that deaths from other causes would occur.

The Diurnal Cycle

● 512 805 Adair has the following regarding divisions of the day recognized among the Chickasaw, with which those of the Creeks were practically identical:

[66] This means that the body was laid flat on its back. The orientation must have been different from that common among the Creeks generally.

[67] Gregg, Commerce of the Prairies, in Early Western Travels, vol. XX, p. 316.

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"They count the day also by the three sensible differences of the sun, like the Hebrews—sunrise, they term, *Hassé kootcha meente* [hàshi kucha minti], 'the sun's coming out';—noon, or mid-day, *Tabookòre* [tabokoli]; and sun-set, *Hassé Oobea* [hàshi àbia], literally, 'the sun is dead'; likewise, *Hasse Ookka'tòra* [hàshi okatula], that is, 'the sun is fallen into the water'; the last word is compounded of *Ookka* [oka], water, and *Etòra* [itola], to fall; it signifies also 'to swim,' as instinct would direct those to do, who fell into the water. And they call dark, Ookklille [oklili]—derived from *Ookka* [oka], water and *Illeh* [illi], dead;[68] which shews their opinions of the sun's disappearance, according to the ancients, who said the sun slept every night in the western ocean. They subdivide the day, by any of the aforesaid three standards—as half way between the sun's coming out of the water; and in like manner, by midnight, or cock-crowing, etc."[69]

The Creeks rose early, and, as we have already described, ran to the creek or the nearest water to plunge in four times before they returned to the fire. Perhaps they owed to this regulation in a measure their skill as swimmers.

Adair says:

"Except the Choktah, all our Indians, both male and female, above the state of infancy, are in the watery element nearly equal to amphibious animals, by practice: and from the experiments necessity has forced them to, it seems as if few were endued with such strong natural abilities,—very few can equal them in their wild situation of life."[70]

He attributes the deficiencies of the Choctaw in this particular to an absence of deep rivers or creeks in their country and he was so much impressed by the failing that he mentions it four times and gives it as the principal cause of the greater part of the losses they had suffered in their wars with the Muskogee.[71] How much truth there may have been in this we do not know. Whatever there was could probably have been traced to something in their environment or their customs.

While in later times, at least, the ancient Creeks did not have meals at regular hours as with us, they had two meals at irregular hours, one between 7 and 10 in the morning, the other around 2 in the afternoon. There was always a pot of sofki ready into which anyone could dip whenever the spirit moved him, and Swan says they resorted to it about once an hour.[72] This was their only supper. Labor was performed early by both men and women, and ordinarily it was laid aside about 2 o'clock, after which a ball game might be indulged in, and in the evening a dance until late at night.

[68] The etymology is probably altogether wrong.
[69] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., p. 76.
[70] Ibid., p. 406.
[71] Ibid., pp. 283, 291–292, 394, 404.
[72] Swan in Schoolcraft, Ind. Tribes, vol. v, p. 274.

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512 The following cross-section of a Seminole Indian village "in action" is given by Bartram, and is interesting in this connection:

"As I continued coasting the Indian shore [i. e., the west shore of the St. Johns River] . . . on doubling a promontory, I suddenly saw before me an Indian settlement, or village. It was a fine situation, the bank rising gradually from the water. There were eight or ten habitations, in a row or street, fronting the water, and about fifty yards distant from it. Some of the youth were naked, up to their hips in the water, fishing with rods and lines; whilst others, younger, were diverting themselves in shooting frogs with bows and arrows. On my near approach, the little children took to their heels, and ran to some women who were hoeing corn; but the stouter youth stood their ground, and, smiling, called to me. As I passed along, I observed some elderly people reclined on skins spread on the ground, under the cool shade of spreading Oaks and Palms, that were ranged in front of their houses; they arose, and eyed me as I passed, but perceiving that I kept on without stopping, they resumed their former position." [73]

The Annual Cycle

805 821 Adair says that the Indians divided the year into four seasons, spring, summer, autumn, and winter, and numbered the years by any one of them. He gives the names of these periods in the Cherokee and Chickasaw languages. The last are Otoolpha, Tóme palle, Ashtòramóona, and Ashtòra.[74] He derives Otoolpha from "oolpha, the name of a bud or to shoot out," but I am unable to identify the word in Choctaw unless it is *àlba*, "vegetation, herbs, plants, weeds," and it may be a Chickasaw term. Tóme palle signifies "bright and warm" or "warm brightness." Palle, or pàlli, is a Chickasaw word and it would seem from Byington's dictionary [75] that it was later used by itself to signify "summer." The next name would be in Choctaw *hàshtula himona* or *hàshtulàmmona*, "the beginning of winter," and the last *hàshtula*. *Hàshtula* means "winter" in Choctaw as well as Chickasaw, but autumn is *hàshtulahpi*, "beginning of winter," the significance being about the same. The Choctaw, however, use *tofa* for summer and *tofahpi* for spring.

In Creek, while the distinction of four seasons was probably made, at least at times, out of regard for the sacred number four, summer and winter were, as Swan tells us, principally used in counting the years, and the months were divided into two series which were supposed to correspond to those two seasons but in fact cut both summer and winter about in half.[76] The existence of the two series

[73] Bartram, Travels, pp. 90-91.
[74] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., p. 74.
[75] Bull. 46, Bur. Amer. Ethn.
[76] Swan in Schoolcraft, Ind. Tribes, vol. v, pp. 276-277.

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In the Yuchi calendar recorded by Doctor Speck five months agree with those in Swan's list, with but slight variation, both in name and in the period of the year to which they were applied. It seems rather curious that these all belonged to the summer series.[84]

Adair says of the Indians of his acquaintance: "They pay great regard to the first appearance of every new moon, and, on the occasion, always repeat some joyful sounds, and stretch out their hands toward her—but at such times they offer no public sacrifice."[85] And in another place he remarks that they "annually observed their festivals . . . at a prefixed time of a certain moon."[86]

House building was a social affair and was distributed between the spring and fall. Adair gives a very lively account of the operation.

"While the memory of the bleak pinching winds lasts, and they are covered with their winter-blackened skins, they turn out early in the spring, to strip clap-boards and cypress-bark, for the covering of their houses: but in proportion as the sun advances, they usually desist from their undertaking during that favourable season; saying, 'that in the time of warm weather, they generally plant in the fields, or go to war; and that building houses in the troublesome hot summer, is a needless and foolish affair, as it occasions much sweating,'—which is the most offensive thing in life to every red warrior of manly principles. On this account, if we except the women chopping firewood for daily use, it is as rare to hear the sound of an ax in their countries, as if they lived under the inhospitable torrid zone; or were nearly related to the South-American animal Pigritia, that makes two or three days journey in going up a tree, and is as long in returning. When the cold weather approaches, they return to their work, and necessity forces them then to perform what a timely precaution might have executed with much more ease. When they build, the whole town, and frequently the nearest of their tribe in neighboring towns, assist one another, well knowing that many hands make speedy work of that, which would have discouraged any of them from ever attempting by himself. In one day, they build, daub with their tough mortar mixed with dry grass, and thoroughly finish, a good commodious house."[87]

"They first trace the dimensions of the intended fabric and every one has his task prescribed him after the exactest manner."[88]

There was, of course, nothing like a week among them in olden times, though Bartram assures us that the Creeks at one of the towns through which he passed remained quietly in their houses on Sunday out of respect to the white people.[89] The Alabama have the following

[84] Speck, in Anthr. Publs. Univ. Mus., Univ. Pa., vol. I, p. 67.
[85] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., p. 76.
[86] Ibid., pp. 99-100.
[87] But see p. 372.
[88] Adair, op. cit., p. 427.
[89] Bartram, Travels, p. 428.

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terms for the days of the week: ni"ta holo', "holy day," Sunday; ni"ta ho'lin ni"ta, "day after holy day," Monday; ni"ta ato'kla, "second day," Tuesday; ni"ta tutci'na, "third day," Wednesday; ni"ta osta'ga, "fourth day," Thursday; ata'lapi, "fifth day," Friday; ni"ta holosi, "little holy day," Saturday. Christmas is ni"ta holo' tcoba', "big holy day," in Koasati, and Kilisme', "Christmas," in Alabama.

After the busk men and women alike devoted the rest of the summer largely to the cultivation and harvesting of their crops. In the fall took place the Skunk Dance. After that the hunting began, and the men were away from town much of the time, but, when there was plenty of food or the game was near town, ball contests in which hunting played a part took place, accompanied with feasting and dancing, and these lasted until very cold weather.

The following account of these feasts and sports was given me by one of the Texas Alabama and is typical:

Sometimes a woman would make a ball and give it to one of the men who in turn must kill a deer for her. This the women cut up and prepared for all of the people in the village and they assembled at the ball ground to eat it. Then they feasted, played ball, and frequently danced in the evening. Sometimes several balls would be made at the same time and given out by as many women. After the ball or balls were used up another woman made one for another man and the games and feasts were thus continued at the pleasure of the tribe. Sometimes, when a woman gave a ball to a man in this way, she would say she wanted bear meat. Then they would play ball for a while, after which the man would go out with three or four others and kill a bear. They gave this to the woman, who distributed the meat as before. While the men were away the women were out after kanta roots [80] and they prepared a quantity of kanta bread. Kanta was always eaten with bear meat and corn bread (and potatoes) with deer meat. When the kanta was used up the men went for bear once more and the women went to the store and bought wheat flour. These celebrations lasted for some time.

Sometimes, when a woman gave out a ball in this way, she would say she wanted squirrels and the men would kill enough of them for the village, bring them to her and let her distribute them, when the same festivities were repeated. Again she might say she wanted coffee, and the man whom she addressed would go and buy enough for the village. It was brought to the ball ground and prepared there. This giving was often repeated many times.[81]

Often, however, the families were separated all winter, those who were related camping together. In the old country, at least, all but

[80] The word kanta was applied to several species of smilax.

[81] See also pp. 525-527, 555-556. Charlie Thompson, my informant, and another Indian now long dead first began to have dinners after the white men's style, and now they are all of that character.